

REMARKS

The Office Action dated March 24, 2008 has been received and carefully noted. The following remarks are submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

Claims 3-4 are currently pending in the application and are respectfully submitted for consideration.

The Office Action rejected claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable as obvious over Haunschild (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0139053) (“Haunschild”) in view of Chambers, Jr., *et al.* (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0027578) (“Chambers”). The Office Action took the position that Haunschild discloses all the elements of claims 3 and 4, except that while “Haunschild discloses the use of a web-based system which will generate a revised checklist, [Haunschild] fails to disclose the checklist being saved in a database, and when an update is received, updating the checklist by either modifying the task, deleting a task, or adding a task to the checklist in the database.” The Office Action then cited Chambers as curing the deficiencies of Haunschild. (see Office Action at page 3, section 5).

Claim 3 recites an apparatus for supporting revision of a checklist for checking soundness of a company in accordance with revision of the laws and ordinances. The apparatus includes a first database of a checklist containing check items for checking conformity by each of a plurality of departments of the company with the relevant laws and ordinances, said check items associated with names of the provisions of laws and ordinances. The apparatus includes a second database of laws/ordinances data including

texts of provisions. The apparatus includes a computer for supporting revision of the check list responsive to entry of revision of laws and ordinances. The apparatus includes means for connecting said computer to an external database containing newest provisions of laws and ordinances for receiving revision information relative to the provisions of laws and ordinances. The computer is configured to, responsive to receipt of said revision information, determine whether the revision relate to the laws/ordinances stored in said second database. The computer is further configured to, if the determination is positive and the revision relates to deletion, delete from the checklist in said first database the name of the provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information and delete relevant check item. The computer is further configured to, if the determination is positive and the revision relates to addition, add to the checklist in said first database the name of the provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information and add to the checklist a check item associated with the added provision. The computer is further configured to, if the determination is positive and the revision relates to updating, replace a relevant check item in the checklist associated with the updated provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information with the text of the updated provision. The computer is further configured to send signals via an intranet to the departments notifying the revision of the checklist.

Claim 4 recites a computer implemented method of supporting revision of a checklist for checking soundness of a company in accordance with revision of the laws and ordinances. The checklist is stored in a first database and contains check items for

checking conformity by each of a plurality of departments of the company with the relevant laws and ordinances. The check items associated with names of the provisions of laws and ordinances, texts of said relevant laws and ordinances are stored in a second database. The computer carries out the step of connecting the computer to an external database containing newest provisions of laws and ordinances and receiving revision information relative to the provisions of the relevant laws and ordinances stored in the second database. The computer carries out the further step of, if the revision information indicates deletion, deleting from the checklist the name of the provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information and delete the relevant check item. The computer carries out the further step of, if the revision information indicates addition, adding to the checklist the name of the provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information and add to the checklist the check item associated with the revised provision. The computer carries out the further step of, if the revision information indicates updating, replacing the relevant check item in the checklist associated with the revised provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information with the text of the revised provision. The computer carries out the further step of sending signals via an intranet to the departments notifying the revision of the checklist.

As will be discussed below, the combination of Haunschild and Chambers fails to disclose or suggest all of the elements of the claims, and therefore fails to provide the features discussed above.

Haunschild generally discloses a method and system for perpetually auditing compliance with rules and regulations emanating from government and other regulatory agencies. A secured, interactive web site system hosted by at least one computer server is provided, where access to the web-based system is limited to authorized users. Subject items specific for an authorized user are identified. Subsequently, regulatory compliance requirements that are applicable for each identified subject item are determined. The regulatory compliance requirements are continuously updated for the identified subject items, and the status of each of the identified subject items is periodically checked to determine applicability of the regulations. (see Haunschild at Abstract).

Chambers generally discloses a dynamic checklist system and process for managing projects, wherein each project has a checklist associated with it. The checklist is developed after determining the requirements of the project. Each checklist is divided into one or more milestones, and each milestone is provided with status checks. As each step is completed, the project is allowed to continue on to the next step having a further set of one or more milestones to be completed. Further progress on the project may be interrupted until all required steps in a given checklist are completed. (see Chambers at Abstract).

Applicants respectfully submit that Haunschild and Chambers, whether considered individually or in combination, fail to disclose, teach, or suggest, all of the elements of the present claims. For example, the combination of Haunschild and Chambers fails to disclose, teach, or suggest, at least, *“a second database of laws/ordinances data including*

texts of provisions,” as recited in claim 3, and “texts of said relevant laws and ordinances being stored in a second database,” as recited in claim 4; “responsive to receipt of said revision information, determine whether the revision relate to the laws/ordinances stored in said second database,” as recited in claim 3; “if the determination is positive and the revision relates to deletion, delete from the checklist in said first database the name of the provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information and delete relevant check item,” as recited in claim 3, and similarly recited in claim 4.

Furthermore, the combination of Haunschild and Chambers fails to disclose, teach, or suggest, at least, *“if the determination is positive and the revision relates to addition, add to the checklist in said first database the name of the provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information and add to the checklist a check item associated with the added provision,” as recited in claim 3, and similarly recited in claim 4, and “if the determination is positive and the revision relates to updating, replace a relevant check item in the checklist associated with the updated provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information with the text of the updated provision,” as recited in claim 3, and similarly recited in claim 4.*

With respect to, *“a second database of laws/ordinances data including texts of provisions,” as recited in claim 3, and “texts of said relevant laws and ordinances being stored in a second database,” as recited in claim 4,* Haunschild discloses that the regulatory compliance data which is stored in the web-based system does not include the text of the provisions of the laws and ordinances. Instead, the regulatory compliance data

is in the format of a summary of applicable compliance requirements associated with a provision of a law or ordinance, and a hyperlink to a government regulatory database, where the government regulatory database contains the full text of the provision. (see Haunschild at paragraphs 0020, 0025, 0041, 0044; claim 41). In contrast, according to embodiments of the invention, a database is provided which stores the applicable laws and regulations in electronic format. (see Specification at page 6, lines 7-16).

Furthermore, Chambers fails to cure this deficiency of Haunschild, as Chambers fails to disclose, or suggest, a database of laws/ordinances data including texts of provisions. Instead, Chambers discloses a database which contains a list of statuses and checklists. There is no disclosure, or suggestion, that the database also contains the text of provisions of laws and ordinances. (see Chambers at paragraphs 0023-0024).

With respect to, *“responsive to receipt of said revision information, determine whether the revision relate to the laws/ordinances stored in said second database,”* as recited in claim 3, Applicants respectfully submit that the revision process disclosed in Haunschild has significant differences compared to the revision process according to embodiments of the invention. Specifically, as described above, Haunschild discloses a single data structure which contains the entire set of regulatory compliance data. (see Haunschild at paragraphs 0020, 0025, 0041, 0044, 0046; claim 41). Furthermore, Haunschild discloses that the system includes software for continuously updating the regulatory compliance data by comparing the existing rules and regulations with newly published compliance rules. (see Haunschild at paragraphs 0018, 0023, 0037, and 0043;

claim 41). Haunschild fails to disclose a step of, upon receiving revision information, determining whether a revision relates to the regulatory compliance data stored in the data structure. This is due to the fact that, in Haunschild, there is only one data structure which contains the entire set of regulatory compliance data. Thus, any received revision information must relate to the regulatory compliance data, as it would not be transmitted to the data structure otherwise.

In contrast, according to embodiments of the present invention, the system is provided with an “all-laws” database for storing all the laws and regulations, and a “corporate” database for storing only the laws and regulations which apply to that company. Thus, when the system receives revision information from the “all-laws database,” the system performs a determination to ensure that the revision information applies to the company before updating the “corporate” database. (see Specification at page 5, line 29 – page 6, line 16; Figure 1). This determination is required, because, due to the fact that there is more than one data structure, there is a possibility that the revision information does not apply to the company, and thus, no update needs to be performed. As discussed above, this is not possible in Haunschild, as only one data structure contains the entire set of regulatory compliance data, and thus, this determining step is not disclosed or suggested in Haunschild.

Furthermore, Chambers fails to cure the deficiencies of Haunschild, as Chambers also fails to disclose or suggest determining whether a revision relates to the laws/ordinances stored in the database. Similar to Haunschild, Chambers merely

discloses that when an administrator updates the checklist in a system controls database, the existing checklists are automatically updated. (see Chambers at paragraphs 0023-0024). There is no disclosure, or suggestion, of an additional determining step where it is determined whether a revision relates to the laws/ordinances stored in the database.

With respect to, *“if the determination is positive and the revision relates to deletion, delete from the checklist in said first database the name of the provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information and delete relevant check item,”* *“if the determination is positive and the revision relates to addition, add to the checklist in said first database the name of the provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information and add to the checklist a check item associated with the added provision,”* and *“if the determination is positive and the revision relates to updating, replace a relevant check item in the checklist associated with the updated provision of the laws/ordinances identified by the revision information with the text of the updated provision,”* as recited in claim 3, and similarly recited in claim 4, Applicants respectfully submit that even if the disclosures of Haunschild and Chambers are combined, the combination still does not disclose, or suggest, the above limitations of claims 3 and 4.

As described above, the Office Action correctly concludes that neither Haunschild, nor Chambers, discloses said limitations individually. Instead, as described above, the Office Action parses the claimed limitations, separating the law/ordinances and checklist aspects of the limitations from the database aspect of the limitations. The Office Action then relies on Haunschild to disclose the law/ordinances and checklist aspects, and

Chambers to disclose the database aspect. (see Office Action at page 3, section 5). However, the Office Action characterizes the claimed limitations as “the checklist being saved in a database, and when an update is received, updating the checklist by modifying the task, deleting a task, or adding a task to the checklist in the database.” (see Office Action at page 3, section 5). The Office Action’s analysis of the claims appears to ignore certain limitations of the claims. For example, the claims recite that the first database not only contains check items, but that the check items are associated with names of the provisions of laws and ordinances. Furthermore, when a check item in the database is either added, deleted, or updated, not only is the check item updated, but the name of the provision of the relevant law/ordinance is also updated. In other words, the name of the provision is either added or deleted to the database, and, in the case of the update, the text of the updated provision is inserted, replacing the relevant check item. (see claims 3 and 4 of present application).

Thus, even if the system of Haunschild, were modified to contain the database of Chambers, the system of Haunschild would not include a database which included check items associated with names of the provisions of laws and ordinances, where, when a check item is either added or deleted, the name of the relevant provision is also added or deleted, and where, when a check item is updated, the text of the relevant provision is also updated. This is due to the fact that there is no disclosure or suggestion in Haunschild of updating the name or the text of the relevant provision, because the data structure does not contain the text of the relevant provision. (see Haunschild at

paragraphs 0020, 0025, 0041, 0044, 0046; claim 41). This is also because, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Chambers of storing and updating the name or text of a provision of a relevant law or ordinance, and associating said provision with a check item. (see Chambers at paragraphs 0023-0024).

In contrast, according to embodiments of the invention, when a law/ordinance is revised, a provision file in the “all-laws” database 110 associated with the revised law/ordinance is updated and transmitted to a processor 101. Upon reception of the revision information, the processor 101 determines whether or not the revised law/ordinance relates to the company operations (i.e. whether the revised law/ordinance is included in “corporate laws” database 105b). If the revised law/ordinance does relate to the company operations, then the processor determines whether the revision is an addition, deletion, or update. (see Specification at page 9, line 13 – page 10, line 1).

Thus, according to embodiments of the invention, when the revision information indicates a deletion, the processor 101 identifies the provision name of the law/ordinance information indicating the deletion, and deletes the underlying law/ordinance of the provision and the check point associated with the underlying law/ordinance from a master checklist database and a job classification check item database. (see Specification at page 10, lines 22-30). When the revision information indicates an update, the processor 101 performs the update by replacing a relevant check point with the provision content of the provision indicated by the revision information. (see Specification at page 11, lines 1-14). When the revision information indicates an addition, the processor 101 adds a new

check point associated with the name of the law and ordinance and the underlying provision to the master checklist. (see Specification at page 12, lines 9-26).

Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above, the combination of Haunschild and Chambers fails to disclose, teach, or suggest, all of the elements of claims 3-4. For the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

For at least the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited prior art references fails to disclose or suggest all of the elements of the claimed invention. These distinctions are more than sufficient to render the claimed invention unanticipated and unobvious. It is therefore respectfully requested that all of claims 3-4 be allowed, and this application passed to issue.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the applicants' undersigned representative at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,



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